

REMARKS

Entry of this amendment, reconsideration of all grounds of objection and rejection, and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Claims 1-4 remain pending herein, with claims 3 and 4 being previous withdrawn from consideration at the present time.

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants have overcome this ground of rejection by clarifying that the movement of each individual head on said Y-slide can move independent of other heads on the same Y-slide. Applicants respectfully submit that a person of ordinary skill in the art clearly and fully understands the claimed elements and the inter-relation there between. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Hata et al. (U.S. 5,778,525 hereafter "Hata"). Applicants respectfully traverse this ground of rejection.

Claim 1 recites in part that "each of the at least two placement heads arranged on said Y-slide move simultaneously in the X-direction and each of the at least two placement heads is independently drivable in a Y-direction." Applicants note that support is found in the specification at least at page 2, lines 15-18.

The presently claimed invention permits one of the placement heads to pick up a component from one of the feeders while, simultaneously, one of the other placement heads can prepare the printed circuit board for placement of the component.

For example, as shown in the drawing, H11 and H12 on slide 8 are independently driveable in the Y-direction. They do not have to move as a pair. Also, please note the

distances between H11 and H12 on slide 8 verses H21 and H22 on slide 9. The difference is due to independent movement of the heads.

The presently claimed invention, by having independently driveable heads arranged on the Y-slide, permit each placement head to reach every part of at least a number of feeders and every part of the printed circuit board (please see specification, page 2, lines 24-28).

Applicants respectfully submit that the assertion in the Office Action that motors 47, 56 shown that each head is adapted for independent movement is incorrect. The motor 47 provides movement in the X-direction whereas the motor 56 provides movement in the Y-direction. Motor 47 turns clockwise or counterclockwise to cause the head position mechanism 41 to move. Applicants note that the support plate 42 merely supports the head position mechanism and does not assist or provide independent movement in the Y-direction.

When motor 56 is actuated, both of the heads move together in the Y-direction as they are both engaged with ball threads 54 that turn either clockwise or counter clockwise depending upon which way motor 56 turns.

Accordingly, Hata fails to disclose or suggest placements heads on a Y-slide that are independently driveable in the Y-direction. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hata. Applicants respectfully traverse this ground of rejection.

Claim 2 is allowable at least for its dependence from instant claim 1, which, for the above-mentioned reasons, is believed to be allowable. A person of ordinary skill in

the art at the time of the invention would not have found claim 2 to have been obvious in view of Hata.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all grounds of rejection have been overcome, and the present claims are patentable in view of the cited reference. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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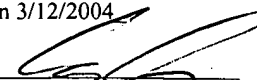
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